THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE: A PREMATURE ENTERPRISE DICTATED BY CIRCUMSTANCES?

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MAGATTE NDIAYE
Senegalese Army

USAWC CLASS OF 2011

U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED *(From - To)*
24-03-2011	Strategy Research Project	

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
The African Standby Force: A Premature Enterprise Dictated by Circumstances?	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
LTC Magatte Ndiaye	5e. TASK NUMBER
Senegalese Army	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
Mr. Brent C. Bankus Regional Security National Security Issues Group U.S. Army War College	

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
U.S. Army War College 122 Forbes Avenue Carlisle, PA 17013	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Distribution A: Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Only a work of the United States Government is not subject to copyright. The author is not an employee of the United States Government. Consequently, this document may be protected by copyright.

14. ABSTRACT

The concept of an African standby force (ASF) responds to the logic of a greater involvement of African States in the resolution of African problems. A protocol adopted on 9 July 2002 envisioned such a force establishment by the African Union (AU) and designed to provide timely and efficient responses to a full spectrum of operations focused on the particular security challenges of the African continent. As currently structured and trained, the ASF will be able to conduct peace support missions and low intensity operations. Yet, there is a misalignment between the mandate requirements and the expected capabilities. Shortcomings are operational and logistical in nature and will hamper responsiveness, effectiveness and sustainability. In order to cope adequately with threats not initially taken into account, the AU should focus mainly on sustainability and operational flexibility which translates into structural changes for increased firepower at brigade level, the integration of enablers and a better leverage of partnerships and international cooperation.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

African Union (AU), Peace and Security Council, PLANEM, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, SADC, Peace Support Operations, TCC

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: UNCLASSIFED			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFED	UNLIMITED	30	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER *(include area code)*

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE: A PREMATURE ENTERPRISE DICTATED BY CIRCUMSTANCES?

by

Lieutenant Colonel Magatte Ndiaye
Senegalese Army

Mr. Brent C. Bankus
Project Adviser

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Magatte Ndiaye

TITLE: The African Standby Force: A Premature Enterprise Dictated by Circumstances?

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 23 March 2011   WORD COUNT: 5,785   PAGES: 30

KEY TERMS: African Union (AU), Peace and Security Council, PLANEM, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, SADC, Peace Support Operations, TCC

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The concept of an African standby force (ASF) responds to the logic of a greater involvement of African States in the resolution of African problems. A protocol adopted on 9 July 2002 envisioned such a force establishment by the African Union (AU) and designed to provide timely and efficient responses to a full spectrum of operations focused on the particular security challenges of the African continent. As currently structured and trained, the ASF will be able to conduct peace support missions and low intensity operations. Yet, there is a misalignment between the mandate requirements and the expected capabilities. Shortcomings are operational and logistical in nature and will hamper responsiveness, effectiveness and sustainability. In order to cope adequately with threats not initially taken into account, the AU should focus mainly on sustainability and operational flexibility which translates into structural changes for increased firepower at brigade level, the integration of enablers and a better leverage of partnerships and international cooperation.

THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE: A PREMATURE ENTERPRISE DICTATED BY CIRCUMSTANCES?

> Africa will in the short to medium term continue to experience violent conflicts which tend to be complicated and give rise to complex emergency situations. The implication is not just that there is a need for a response mechanism, but rather that the nature and effect of these conflicts necessitate the development of a mechanism that is capable of deploying robust and effective responses to contain and eventually address these situations. This mechanism should also be flexible enough to handle different kinds of situations.[1]
>
> —Dr Solomon A. Dersso

Currently the African continent absorbs over 50% of the resources devoted to the peacekeeping operations mandated by the United Nations. While the efforts of the international community for peace and security in Africa are commendable, they are often inadequate to ensure effectiveness. Worse yet, any mission is subject to approval by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) which is not always responsive. For example, in 1994 the United Nations (UN) decided to pull out its troops instead of reinforcing the mission paving the way for the genocide in Rwanda. This and several other examples of selective engagements by the UN have led nations on the continent to take a greater hand in resolving security issues.

The purpose of this Strategic Research Paper is to confirm the vitality of the ASF, to acknowledge the limits of the current force structure in coping with current challenges and future trends, and to recommend ways and means to achieve enduring peace and stability throughout the contingent.

<u>Establishment of a Standby Force</u>

The ASF is derived from a collective will of African leaders to respond to what was perceived as biases on the part of the international community with regard to

security issues in Africa in the 90's. In addition to Rwanda, the withdrawal of the UN

mission in Somalia in 1995 when the crisis was far from being contained was also a

triggering event. Interventions led by the Economic Community of West African States

Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia in 1990 and in Sierra Leone in 1997 were so

successful and cost effective that they garnered international support and recognition,

laying the foundation for similar enterprises in other regions.[2]

"Instability in Africa has demanded substantial humanitarian and defense

resources from the international community, and the United States and other donor

countries have acknowledged the utility and potential cost-effectiveness of assisting

African forces to enhance their capabilities to participate in these operations."[3] Security

is an enduring challenge to stability and development in Africa, requiring a collective

response for reasons specific to the nature of the African states. "Adopting a strategy of

coming together in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation is viewed by most of the

leaders as the only way forward, particularly in the context of a globalizing world." [4]

Legal Framework.

The ASF draw its legitimacy from previsions of the UN Charter but also
from the Constitutive Act of the AU which "Article 4(h) not only creates the
legal basis for intervention but also imposes an obligation on the AU to
intervene to prevent or stop the perpetration of such heinous international
crimes anywhere on the continent."[5]

Article 4 (j) of the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) also deals with the

subject matter. However, details on the actual establishment of the force are specified

for the first time in the policy framework adopted by the third meeting of African Chiefs

of Defense Staff held in Addis-Ababa on 15 and 16 May 2003. The force structure of the

regional brigades is shown in figure 1 below.

X
65/16

HHC					m	
120/0	750/70	750/70	750/70	750/70	505/?	150/?

		MP	FSB		Mil Observer	Civ Support
80/10/4	135/?	48/17	190/40	35/10	120/?	?/?

Personnel/Vehicles/Helicopters

Source: ASF Roadmap, page A3

4448+/373+/4
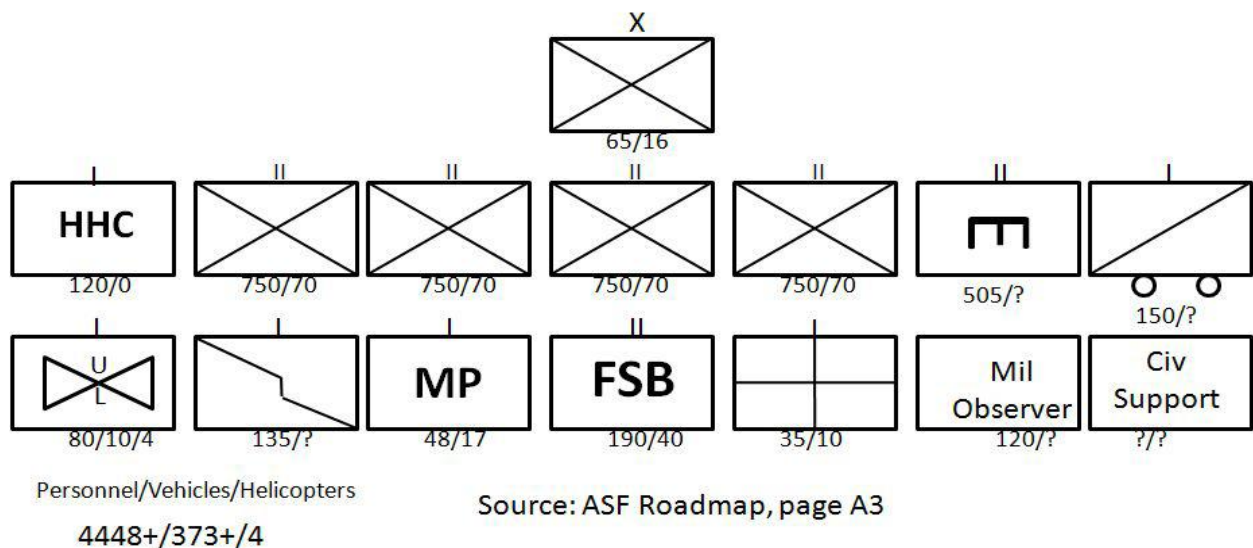
Figure 1. Standby Brigade structure[6]

Mandates. "The AU is the sole African mandating authority for peace operations in situations consistent with the UN Charter and the Constitutive Act of the AU."[7] Not only does a UN resolution provide legitimacy for a Peace Support Operation (PSO), but it is also a prerequisite for reimbursements to troop contributing countries (TCC). Consequently, regional organizations are required to consult and get an authorization from the AU before engaging in any PSO. Indeed, "Ceasefire or peace agreements negotiated by the AU, to be implemented by the ASF, should meet threshold conditions, such as consistency with international human rights standards and practicability of specified tasks and timelines."[8]

Concept of Operation. There is a general perception that the UN will not conduct robust operations or enforcement missions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in Africa for the *foreseeable* future.[9]

Consequently, the AUPSC has developed six (6) scenarios for the full spectrum of security challenges likely to be encountered, ranging from a small traditional peacekeeping operation to the planning and execution of robust missions such as a Chapter VII peace enforcement mission(see table 1).

Scenario	Description	Deployment requirement. *(from mandate resolution)*
1	AU/Regional military advice to a political mission.	30 days
2	AU/Regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN mission.	30 days
3	Stand-alone AU/Regional observer mission.	30 days
4	AU/Regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (and peace building).	30 days
5	AU Peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions, including those involving low-level spoilers.	90 days with the military component being able to deploy in 30 days.
6	AU intervention, e.g. in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly.	14 days with robust military force

Table 1. Scenarios of engagement[10]

Threat Assessment

> In the 21st century conflicts, particularly of the internal kind, continue to pose as serious a threat as disease and drought to the life, security and property of people and the survival of the post-colonial African state…There are several factors that suggest that Africa will continue to witness violent conflicts and serious political upheavals.[11]

Current Threats. Africa has the world's largest number of active peacekeeping operations due to a variety of enduring security challenges. Even though emerging trends suggest that such incidents of large-scale armed conflict will gradually decline in Africa[12], chronic violence continues to jeopardize stability and growth opportunities in many states, leading to extreme poverty and paving the way for illegal activities, especially piracy, human trafficking and drug smuggling. Worse, the inability of states to exercise effective control over their territory creates safe heavens for terrorists and violent extremists. For example, Al-Shabaab[13] militiamen and terrorists of Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) are today particularly active in Somalia and the Sahel region.

Further, workers of AREVA, a French firm exploiting uranium mines in Niger have been kidnapped by AQIM terrorists, collaborating with Touareg rebels groups in northern Mali and Niger while oil installations in the Gulf of Guinea have been subjected to attacks from the rebel group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

Future *Security Environment.* Security challenges faced by the AU in the foreseeable future will be *complex* in nature, multidimensional in scope and unpredictable as to the timing of their outbreak.

Lack of political legitimacy will likely continue to generate violent uprisings and brutal repression by security forces often without regard to basic human rights. Even leaders democratically elected will continue to face a dilemma: the delicate balance of the responsibility to ensure territorial integrity of their country versus the right of minorities for self-determination.

While not unique to the African continent it is certainly more accentuated due to more diverse populations, the centralization of power and the fact that democracy in most African states is shaped by ethnicity, religion or race. Also, the AU forbids any modification of the borders inherited from colonial powers[14] even though such a consensus does not guarantee peace and stability. On the contrary, the existence of many states without the necessary resources to prosper as independent entities is a destabilizing factor.

In addition to these classic threats, non–state actors have succeeded in weakening many states not only by undermining the authority of the central government but also by pinning down significant amounts of resources. Corollary to these threats originating from the spread of religious fundamentalism and the increase of narco-

traffiking, are piracy, illegal immigration and human trafficking. The common denominator of all these criminal activities is that they sustain armed conflicts if left unchecked. Moreover, disputes over the share of common resources will be a major cause of inter-state conflicts in the future. In particular, the share of natural resources in border regions and of waterways flowing through more than one country will be a survival interest to some states. Lastly, the outside state and non-state actors, will continue to provide the necessary means to sustain the conflicts. The support of belligerents may differ but the ends are always the same, weakening central governments in order to consolidate their control over the economy, the key installations and any strategic resource.[15]

Required Capabilities.

"Special operations forces are an excellent force multiplier and training force that can be used for many different tasks if properly trained. They may also be extremely useful for extreme operations that involve extracting critical personnel in emergencies."[16]

Aerial surveillance seems to be the most cost effective way of monitoring vast under-governed areas in the Sahel region, and the airspace and maritime domain of failed states. Defeating or mitigating the threat in these areas requires maritime capabilities, anti-drug teams, antiterrorist units, costal radars and drones. Adequate fire support is also essential to the engagement of the ASF in robust combat operations.[17]

Capability Assessment

ASF Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) and Capabilities. Once fully fielded, the ASF strength in manpower will be over 25,000, more than any single mission conducted to date on African soil. Theoretically, the ASF should be capable of carrying out peacekeeping operations under Chapter VI when fully operational.

However, the force is slightly behind schedule and the logistic requirements are not yet fulfilled. A certification exercise of the HQ was conducted at the end of October 2010. The results have not been officially released but the ASF has received levels of training no other peacekeeping force has ever received before deployment. In particular, the ECOWAS standby brigade, one of the 5 brigades of the ASF also called ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF), has made noticeable and steady progress. Exercises conducted in Senegal in 2007 and in Burkina Faso in 2009 have revealed respectable levels of proficiency down to the platoon. They provided evidence that the ESF is capable of conducting low intensity combat operations. Similar exercises have also been conducted in other regions but with less encouraging results. Also, the Maghreb Arab Union has still not established a standby force as required. Libya has initiated the project but due to internal dissensions in the region, no tangible progress has been observed to date. Also, sustainment remains a key issue. Even though depots in Senegal and Sierra Leone can provide the necessary logistical support for the ESF, there are no clear directives on its use. Likewise, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) standby brigade relies on self-sustainment. As some countries might not have enough capabilities, it will create an imbalance in force contribution which will affect decisions on the brigade's employment. Lastly, the East African Community (EAC)[18] and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) standby forces envisioned the establishment of depots but, have not yet achieved that objective. In sum, the AU does not exercise effective control over sustainment, a critical capability only achievable through bilateral arrangements rather than a centralized regional effort.

Expected Support from the International Community. It is unlikely that the ASF

will ever be capable of fulfilling the full range of its missions without a steady and

adapted outside support[19]. Identifying all potential partners and elaborating a strategy of

cooperation that takes into account their respective interests should be a line of effort in

the way ahead. Among the most active players are the former colonial powers who are

still maintaining strong ties with their former colonies and capable of exerting on them

tremendous political influence. For example, France signed defense accords with many

African countries, and its Army assumes strategic positions at various regional schools,

namely the Explosive and Ordnance Disposal (EOD) School in Benin, the Staff Courses

in Mali and Gabon, and the War College in Cameroon. Likewise, the British Army is

mainly responsible for training in Sierra Leone and assumes significant responsibilities

at the Ghanaian Staff College. Key stakeholders include powers and emerging powers

particularly interested in African markets and natural resources, such as China. In all,

the policies of outside actors can be qualified as being either destructive or constructive

based on the nature of their interests and the ways they defend them.

The former colonial powers, namely France and The United Kingdom tend to be

very selective in their approach. As regional communities and the effects of

globalization are conducive to a gradual loss of influence, they are inclined to closely

monitor and if possible to control any process of integration in Africa. Their main effort

being on bilateral agreements, assistance to the ASF's establishment is limited and not

always in line with mission requirements. In reality, they feed the system with second

hand equipment prepositioned in depots of their choosing, with the intent of lend leasing

it to the AU/UN once a PSO is authorized. Their contribution is more destructive than

constructive. However, more destructive are those actors who are unmindful of security issues or benefiting from instability due to increased opportunities for their weapons industries and better competitiveness in international markets. The largest beneficiary is Russia. This power has competing interests with many African states as far as exportation of raw materials is concerned and is also one of the largest weapons exporter to the continent. Anything neutralizing African productivity contributes in bolstering Russia's economy and subsequently increasing her influence over Europe while persisting conflicts sustain her defense industries[20].

Even though China still maintains a destructive posture in a few hotspots such as Sudan and Zimbabwe, her huge investments in the recent years and unlimited access to the various regional markets have shown positive signals, namely the involvement of the Chinese People's Liberation Army in peacekeeping missions throughout the continent. In the past ten years, China has deployed over 5,000 peacekeepers in Africa. The emerging superpower seems to be ripe for partnership building in the security field as materialized by the high number of countries presently reequipping their forces with Chinese equipment and sending officers in various Chinese military institutions. Emerging powers are also concerned about the security of their investments and consequently manage to reinforce the security forces of selected partners. Nevertheless, there are associated risks as they are not inclined to cooperate in the implementation of sanctions which they tend to disregard for fear of equally suffering the consequences[21].

The last constructive actor is the US which has well framed the problem, clearly defined its interests and thoroughly elaborated policies and strategies globally aligned

9

with the objectives of the AUPSC. "The diversity and complexity of the African continent offer the United States opportunities and challenges. As African states grow their economies and strengthen their democratic institutions and governance, America will continue to embrace effective partnerships. Our economy, security, and political cooperation will be consultative and encompass global, regional, and national priorities including access to open markets, conflict prevention, global peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and the protection of vital carbon sinks."[22] As the resources allocated with AFRICOM do not match the US security objectives in Africa, the US should find ways and means to bridge the gap. The challenge will be for the Department of Defense to foster a regional approach to security instead of promoting selective engagements along political lines as is the case with the State Department. Threats in Africa are transnational and violence is rarely confined to a single country. Security has to be taken as a whole and the US cannot be efficient everywhere.

Shortcomings. The fundamental reason for establishing the ASF is to prevent genocide. The killings in Rwanda occurred quasi simultaneously throughout the country and it took the Interamwe militia only three weeks to murder 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus. If a force of 25,000 would be sufficient to prevent genocide in Rwanda, it is obviously insufficient for much larger countries or regions such as Darfur and could only represent at best Africa's contribution to a larger multinational effort. "It is fair to say that it is only in the medium to long term that the ASF will be in a position to implement the full scale of its mandate as spelled out in the PSC Protocol."[23] This point of view seems even too optimistic. Indeed, not only is the personnel strength insufficient for scenario 6 (intervention to stop genocide in case the international community fails to do

so) but their combat power is definitely inadequate for such a mission. It is obvious that the ASF is not structured and resourced to reverse a trend or to alter a balance in favor of a given belligerent. Nevertheless, it can prevent escalation that might otherwise lead to scenario 6. Moreover, the AU may not have an authorization to use equipment stocked in regional depots without the consent of the traditional partners. "Deployment of a military component within 14 days can only be performed by forces that are ready, assembled, fully equipped and exercised with transport available on immediate call and with logistic supplies pre-packed and ready for delivery by air."[24] Transportation is definitely an issue and this concern could not be better summarized by a military expert who acknowledges that the AU is currently dependent upon donor nations such as the US to provide airlift support for the ASF, and estimates that such an option is potentially risky as "the US and other nations may not have the spare capacity to provide timely lift when a crisis breaks."[25] An option based on unavailable assets is not feasible. There should be contingency plans to operate with existing resources.

If Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) are not able to support and sustainment themselves, this could lead to grave consequences such as undue delays in deployment or engagement under inadequate conditions. Likewise, counting on foreign support is not a viable solution in emergency situations. "Donor responses to peacebuilding in Africa … have been slow and fragmented, and have occurred with a great deal of selectivity, reflecting the interests and priorities of donors."[26]

Lastly, as the ASF will most likely be engaged in actual combat, there will be definitely a need for modern intelligence gathering capabilities which are presently lacking in the Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) of the brigades. There are no

sensors and the analytical capabilities are limited.[27] In total, these shortcomings prevent the ASF from being capable of generating a suitable combination of combat power, fighting spirit and sustainability.

<u>Alternative Options</u>

In light of these considerations and the fact that the force will not be fully operational in the near term, there should be an arrangement made both at continental level and in cooperation with the UN to handle contingencies that will arise in the near future.

At a first glance, one should recognize that the most responsive, effective and acceptable ways to cope with severe and unpredictable challenges is to have countries with well trained and well equipped standing units but also a political will to intervene on short notice. Having at least one country with such attributes and capabilities per region would guarantee timeliness and decisiveness at moderate costs to the international community. However, feasibility greatly depends on logistics as most African countries are not constrained by manpower due to high unemployment rates. Indeed, reluctance to pledge troops is caused by uncertainties on securing the necessary equipment and enjoying continuous logistic support. Past experiences have shown that African leaders have the political will to intervene in neighboring countries to help contain a threat or to stabilize a situation, but logistic constraints have invariably affected the overall effectiveness. The crisis in Guinea Bissau in 1998 is a prime example, where because of transportation problems Guinea was unable to deploy major weapon systems. It was only with the assistance of Senegal that the Guinean Army could project Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) and tanks to reestablish the balance of firepower and subsequently prevented the coalition forces from being overrun. Another limitation of

insufficient logistic support is units tend to consume supplies in a frugal fashion.

Subsequently, combat is often avoided to minimize ammunition consumptions and

movement is restricted to avoid breakdowns or vehicles wearing down. Ultimately, it

should be the AU's responsibility to equip and resupply participating units in accordance

with mission requirements. Such arrangements should bring countries to pledge more

troops, leaving the AU with more choices in the type of units to engage for any given

situation. Indeed, the actual principle that one formula suits all scenarios is neither

suitable in today's complex environment nor cost effective.

After a brief overview of past military operations, it becomes clear that Africa's

partners have also their national interest and subsequently an agenda. In fact, the main

object of foreign intervention in Africa has always been the defense of Western interests

and the security of Western citizens[28]. Other types of engagements have been very

selective, serving for the most part the interest of the lead nations (Rwanda 1994 and

Bangui 1997). To date, operations conducted for humanitarian reasons have indeed

been public relations enterprises designed for domestic consumption. In fact, none has

led to a significant improvement of the situation before being dismantled, and the costs

were generally too high for the meager accomplishments[29]. In this regard, it would be

naïve to assume that others will be involved in risky operations for the sole purpose of

ensuring Africa's security and stability. It does not mean that foreign support and

cooperation should be rejected outright. On the contrary, at this stage of development of

most African countries, outside involvement is essential and can be decisive if properly

tailored to supplement the ASF's shortcomings. A precise mandate and detailed Rules

Of Engagement should limit the risks for unwanted side effects and subsequently render

foreign intervention more acceptable. Anyway, the International Community has the moral obligation to participate in the resolution off crisis susceptible of affecting global security.[30] This view reflects current US policies and calls for proactive measures.[31] Nevertheless, the AU should reserve the right to contribute to any security operation in its Area Of Responsibility and be ready to provide the first response as the engagement of alliances is often if not always subjected to a unanimous consensus and the forming of multinational coalitions is time consuming and rarely suitable to cope with emergencies. Since a mandate from the UNSC might be delayed for political reasons, the AU should assemble the necessary resources to provide a timely response as the state of urgency might dictate.

In sum, there will be rare circumstances when African states and regions will have to act unilaterally as most of nowadays' challenges require a global response. Nonetheless, the AU will be expected to provide an immediate response, prepare the deployment of more capable forces, and accompany the international effort. This requires some adjustments to the ASF structure, the equipment and mode of sustainment of the contingents, a clearer definition of command and control relationships, and more thorough guidance on the management of human resources.

Recommendations

Realigning ASF Mandate and Capabilities. The somewhat pessimistic evaluation of the ASF capabilities does not mean that the project should be abandoned. Despite some difficulties and uneven progress in the various regions, the ASF remains a viable solution for African nations to contend with African problems. This is particularly true of those nations who embraced the idea of an ASF and have expended valuable resources to improve the capabilities of their militaries to meet the current continental

security challenges. Additionally, foreign powers that are often called upon to intervene militarily in Africa for humanitarian reasons with potential risks of breaching national sovereignties can nowadays rely on a local multinational force, the ASF, to accomplish these missions at much lower costs and increased legitimacy. Furthermore, tangible progress in the shaping of the ASF will send a message of strength through unity and positively reinforce the position of leaders and thinkers striving for a full regional integration in the near future while encouraging initiatives to achieve an ultimate unification of Africa in the long run.

It is paramount that the force structure be aligned with the mission requirements. Representation is quite essential for ownership, but all AU states should be required to pledge battalion size units for better cohesion and adequate command and control. The countries not engaging troops should nevertheless contribute financially, the amount being established based on their economic strength.

Even when fully operational under its current TOE, the ASF will not have the human resources and equipment to stop any genocide. As the AU will find it difficult to conduct preemptive deployments, the force will not be able to prevent it either.

Consequently, scenario 6 definitely requires a lead nation capable of engaging robust formations and supporting the logistic burden, pending reimbursement by the AU when funds are available. "It is recommended that at the AU level, potential lead nations be identified for Scenario 6 (intervention) type operations. These lead nations would be those Member States with standing deployable HQ capacity of greater than brigade level, and with forces that are capable of seizing points of entry, ideally using airborne or airmobile assets."[32]

However, it is highly likely that countries with such a capability will face legal restrictions. The only alternative will be to attenuate the scope by establishing and protecting assembly areas and corridors leading to safe heavens. Such a mission will require highly trained and sometimes special operations units which are not currently available. The ASF Policy Framework should be amended accordingly.

Enhancing Capabilities through structural Changes and a more feasible Support Mechanism. Even though some specialized units such as Police and Special Forces can operate effectively at company level, battalions should consist of units from the same country, with organic combat and service support assets. Second, a standardization of ASF equipment might lead to friction among supporting partners due to economic considerations. Some countries have already prepositioned some equipment in regional depots with the intent of leasing it to the AU, a policy having several drawbacks. The equipment may not be suitable for the types of missions the ASF will have to carry out. Also, the AU is not able to increase its assets as leasing partners manage to get reimbursements directly from the UN. Except for donations, the AU should manage to buy all major end items.

Third, a major challenge of operating in a multinational context is the reluctance of troop contributing countries to totally relinquish command and control, leading their contingent commanders to selectively execute their assigned tasks. The situation is even worse when TCCs are responsible for sustaining their troops. Consequently, the support requirements have to be amended requiring the AU to be responsible for sustainment once units are deployed. Consequently, all equipment in the regional

depots should be transferred to AU control with authorization to utilize the assets both for training and operational purposes.

Fourth, appointment to key positions should be based on criteria such as experience and competence instead of representation as is currently the case. "The requirement that components of the ASF in each region be parceled out between countries, based on political and not practical considerations, will continue to present many problems in the future."[33] To improve the officer corps, the AU should make a concerted effort to professionally develop officers with high intellectual potential and replace the marginal performers.

Lastly, the scope of partners has to be enlarged. Emerging powers, in particular China will benefit from opportunities resulting from a more stable Africa[34] and might be willing to support the project if fully associated. Increasing the number of partners will not only increase resources, but it will also leverage support at the UNSC and subsequently facilitate the issuing of a UN mandate whenever needed.

Integrating Combat Multipliers.

> In some instances, Member States may offer specialized units that may be useful, but would not normally form part of a brigade group. To cater for this, the AU should include them in centralized arrangements managed at AU level.[35]

For operations in the Sudan, the AU routinely relied on the US for transportation assets to deploy troops to the two active missions, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and the United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). The UN also contracted African commercial airlines such as Kenya Airways or Ethiopia Airlines or other foreign companies to deploy and redeploy its contingents. These arrangements are not feasible when risks are high. Even though Algeria was tasked to make

recommendations on strategic airlift, no significant evolution has occurred to date. Nevertheless, that country's Air Force has robust airlift capabilities.

Exercise "Deggo" conducted in Senegal in 2007 tested all aspects of strategic mobility by land, air and sea[36]. Results revealed the strategic importance of sealift in Africa since the road and railway networks are inadequate. However, no one has been tasked with studying the maritime dimension of the ASF. Paradoxically, South Africa has been mandated to study the aspects of strategic movement by railways. Further, there are bilateral arrangements in the fight against piracy and illegal immigration but no initiative at the regional or continental level to organize maritime standby units. Also, engagement under the different scenarios "may require highly trained units to extract high value personnel/personnel with designated security status from dangerous situations or to extract units that are in danger of being overwhelmed. This could run the gamut from a special operations forces capability to an armor capability."[37] The ASF lacks that critical capability as the reconnaissance units are too light to carry out such missions. Likewise, the level of firepower might be inadequate to cope with situations such as the attack on the Camp of Haskanita in Darfur in September 2007. Mortars alone cannot provide the necessary fire support for robust missions. Lastly, anti-terrorist forces being established with the assistance of the US should be placed under the tactical control (TACON) of the standby brigades or the AU planning element (PLANEM) in order to optimize their employment.

Resourcing of two division level Headquarters (HQ). "A deployable operational headquarters needs to be developed to facilitate overall command and control in a crisis."[38] One operational headquarter is definitely a short term requirement. For

adequate command and control, there should be at least two division level operational

headquarters. As major crises in the continent are predominantly occurring in sub-

Saharan Africa, one HQ might be resourced from personnel provided by ECOWAS and

ECCAS and the other by SADC and EAC. These HQs should not be permanent to

minimize costs, but their personnel should train together as a unit and be at least on a

standby status.

Harmonization of Doctrines and Procedures. Commenting on inadequate

economic remedies, a specialist in African affairs estimates that "external advisors need

to become less self righteous in imparting their imported doctrines."[39] It is quite normal

for foreign advisors to be dogmatic about their doctrines, but they integrate factors that

might not be relevant in an African context. Consequently, the AU needs to develop its

own doctrine which should be taught throughout the continent to ensure continuity along

with a training package to match.

Setting Guidelines for Partnership. The African leadership should be responsible

for identifying the lines of efforts and the critical resources needed for their

accomplishment. The fact that some African partners have seized on the ASF concept

to such a degree that it sometimes undermines *African* ownership[40] is a direct

consequence of limited resources allocated to permanent staffs and subsequent

reliance on foreign assistance. The US is particularly expected to lead a united effort for

adequate infrastructures in Africa. Involving the international community in the financing

of some of the projects identified by the New Partnership for African Development

(NEPAD) will serve that purpose. International involvement would help address core

issues such as the strategic mobility of the ASF while contributing to the reduction of

poverty, a major cause of conflicts in Africa. The main effort should be the upgrading

and extension of railroad networks. A second line of effort should be the development of

air- and sealift capabilities. Lastly, the US can help decrease spoiling activities by ill-

intentioned UN and NGO agents, arms dealers, and countries leasing outdated

equipment to some TCCs, all of whom do their interests to sustain the various conflicts.

Conclusion

The nature and complexity of conflicts in Africa is a puzzle for the international

community whose admonishment of powerlessness could not be better summarized

than in the slogan "African solutions to African problems." But the truth is that African

problems are susceptible of drifting into transcontinental challenges requiring global

responses. Africa's concerted answer to transnational problems is the establishment of

a standby force, a project that the International community has shown an unusual

determination to support. Nevertheless, there are limits to outside support and that

African military leadership should not expect conditions to be perfect before being

mentally ready to intervene. Along with military preparedness, the UN needs to address

the root causes of Africa's security challenges. In this regard, the UN should review the

status of political refugees. Some foreign partners apparently concerned about progress

of the ASF are paradoxically hosting African dissidents[41] who openly plead for the

destruction of their native countries. To that aim, they collect resources for armed

bandits responsible for the murder or thousands of innocent civilians. Many African

countries also allow refugee camps in their territory to function as sanctuaries to rebels

or terrorists[42]. As a renowned expert on African matters points it out, "all around Africa,

resistance forces received military aid and shelter from various external sources that

was invaluable to them in their struggle. Resistance forces that lacked foreign backing had scant prospects for success."[43] Suppressing these types of support might definitely mitigate the consequences of internal conflicts in Africa.

The quest for peace and stability in Africa requires an enduring involvement of the US in the security arrangements on the continent. Besides providing technical expertise to regional standby brigades and AU Headquarters, the US should seek to establish forward logistic depots for emergency deployments, and to permanently deploy combat assets including radars and drones for ground and maritime surveillance, both in East and West Africa. The US should also make bilateral arrangements for free access to the airfields and naval stations necessary for the defense of its specific interests but also for the support to countries and coalitions engaged in contingency operations. In liaison with its allies, the US should also secure pledges for air and sealift capabilities, and make arrangements for close air support in case of contingency operations by the ASF. However, the US has limitations in what can be legitimately done without undermining the sovereignty of most states. Indeed, "the international community cannot solve the problems of internal war and state failure. Solutions will have to come from within African countries."[44] It will be ultimately up to the AU to tackle the core causes of instability and conflicts, namely real democracy, governance, rule of law and the respect of human rights. In other words, "African governments have the sovereign responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in the continent."[45] But to be realistic, African leaders will still need outside support and backing to obtain a mandate from the UNSC.

<u>Endnotes</u>

[1] Dr Solomon A. Dersso, "The role and place of the African Standby Force within the African Peace and Security Architecture," *ISS Paper 209* (January 2010): 3.

[2] A multinational mission codenamed Security and Stabilization Mission in Bangui (French acronym MISSAB) and comprising units from many West and Central African countries aimed at protecting the Government from a military uprising.

[3] Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa* (Washington, DC: Liabrary of Congress, Congressional Research Service, April 3, 2010), 17, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34003.pdf (accessed December 10, 2010).

[4] Timothy Murithi, *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, Peacebuilding and Development* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited. 2005), 2.

[5] Dersso," The role and place of the African Standby Force within the African Peace and Security Architecture,"4.

[6] Jeffery E. Marshall, "Building an Effective African Standby Force to Promote African Stability, Conflict Resolution and Prosperity," *Crisis States Discussion Papers* (April 2009), 6.

[7] African Chiefs of Defense Staff, *Policy Framework For The establishment of The African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part I)* (Addis Ababa: African Union, 15-16 May 2003), 24, http://www.paxafrica.org/areas-of-work/african-peace-and-security-architecture/asf-documents/asf-policy-framework-part-i/view (accessed December 10, 2010).

[8] Ibid., 32.

[9] Jakkie Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An update on progress," *ISS Paper 160* (March 2008): 34.

[10] African Chiefs of Defense Staff, *Policy Framework For The establishment of The African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part I)*, 3 and 6.

[11] Dersso, "The role and place of the African Standby Force within the African Peace and Security Architecture," 2.

[12] Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An update on progress," 34.

[13] A Muslim Extremist Group struggling for power in Somalia.

[14] Article 4b of the Constructive Act of the African Union adopted on 11 July 2000 in Lome.

[15] France has significant interests in Senegal, the Ivory Coast and Chad but coerces the governments of these countries by providing asylum and eventually support to leaders of armed opposition groups and secessionist movements.

[16] Marshall, "Building an Effective African Standby Force to Promote African Stability, Conflict Resolution and Prosperity," 8.

[17] Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan and Chad have well equipped conventional forces but also armed opposition movements rivaling the respective regular Armies in firepower. Coercing such belligerents requires significant fire support capabilities.

[18] Another regional organization, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is also expected to contribute. However, some countries adhering to this organization are not in East Africa, and this might be a source of friction with other regions.

[19] "Given the political reality of the continent and the known capacity and resource limitations, the major challenge for the ASF is how to ensure that the ASF will have the necessary funding, logistics and administrative and strategic management support. It is possible that there may be circumstances under which the AU may need to deploy an ASF mission without the authorization of the UN." Dersso, "The role and place of the African Standby Force", 17.

[20] According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Russia had accounted for 87 percent of Sudan's major conventional weapons purchases in the period 2003-2007, while China was responsible for only eight percent, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34494 (accessed February 3, 2011).

Russia's state arms exporter, Rosoboronexport sold arms worth 7.4 billion dollars in 2007 and was due to boost its arms exports to eight billion dollars by the end of 2008. In particular, it planned in 2009 to grow the volume of Russian armament and military equipment to Africa over the next four to five years, http://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/russia-supplying-legal-and-illegal-arms-to-africa-1711/ (accessed February 3, 2011).

[21] China's leaders often evoke the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of sovereign states to explain why they do not condition their relations with their African counterparts. In fact, they cannot be expected to be regarding on values such as governance, democracy and Human Rights they do not observe themselves. Fundamentally, their priority is on the extraction of raw materials and the isolation of Taiwan.

[22] Barack H. Obama, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), 45, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf (accessed December 10, 2010).

[23] Dersso, "The role and place of the African Standby Force within the African Peace and Security Architecture," 18.

[24] Ibid., 8.

[25] Marshall, "Building an Effective African Standby Force to Promote African Stability, Conflict Resolution and Prosperity," 16.

[26] Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Mathews, *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2004), 340.

[27] Marshall, "Building an Effective African Standby Force to Promote African Stability, Conflict Resolution and Prosperity," 10

[28] The following operations have been conducted by European countries either to protect national interests or to protect western expatriates: Suez 1956, Kolwezi 1978, Ituri 2003, Cote d'Ivoire 2002 and Sierra Leone 2004.

[29] French led "Operation Turquoise" mandated under UNSCR 929 (10 votes of approval and five abstentions) to contribute to the security and protection of displaced persons, refugees and civilians in danger in Rwanda, by means, including the establishment and maintenance, where possible, of safe humanitarian areas. In reality, it was designed to protect those who committed the genocide and who were running away from the victorious Tutsi rebellion.

EU "Operation Arthemis" in the Democratic Republic of Congo mandated under UNSCR 1484 to secure the airport of Bunia, protect internally displaced persons in camps and the civilians in the town. The area of operations was very limited, and consequently atrocities continued in the vicinity. Strength, 1,850; cost, €53.58 million.

European Union Force Chad/CAR mandated under UNSCR 1778 to take all necessary measures, within its capabilities and its area of operation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic to protect civilians, facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid, and ensure the safety of UN personnel. The force was in fact designed to protect Chad against attacks from Chadian armed opposition groups in Sudan. President Idriss Debby terminated the mission of MINURCAT shortly after it relieved the EUFOR. Strength, 3,700; cost, €119.6 million.

"Operation Leopard" (17 May-16 June 1978) conducted by French, Belgian and Zairian paratroopers to save 2,000 Europeans trapped in Kolwezi by armed groups. The European units were relieved a month after their arrival by an African multinational force.

[30] Barack H. Obama, Speech, Accra, Ghana, July 2009, http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090711110050abretnuh0.1079783.html (accessed on February 3, 2011).

[31] "The United States will continue working with African partners to help foster stability and prosperity throughout the continent. The need to assist fragile, post-conflict states, such as Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan, and failed states such as Somalia, and transnational problems, including extremism, piracy, illegal fishing, and narcotics trafficking, pose significant challenges. America's efforts will hinge on partnering with African states, other international allies and partners, and regional and sub-regional security organizations to conduct capacity-building and peacekeeping operations, prevent extremism, and address humanitarian crises." Robert M, Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review, (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1 February 2010)*, 61.

[32] African Chiefs of Defense Staff, *Policy Framework For The establishment of The African Standby Force and the Military Staff* Committee (Part I), 17.

[33] Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An update on progress," 18.

[34] "Africa has become a key dimension of China's national strategy." Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *China Returns to Africa: A rising Power and a Continent Embrace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 141.

[35] African Chiefs of Defense Staff, *Policy Framework For The establishment of The African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part I)*, 23.

[36] The squadron from Mali was transported with organic equipment by rail, the company from Burkina was airlifted, and the company from the Gambia travelled by road, while the companies from Guinea Bissau and Guinea were transported by ship.

[37] Marshall, "Building an Effective African Standby Force to Promote African Stability, Conflict Resolution and Prosperity," 11.

[38] Ibid., 22.

[39] Murithi, *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, Peacebuilding and Development,* 16.

[40] Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An update on progress," 18.

[41] A Senegalese named Nkrumah Sane is in Paris as a refugee but continues his political activities, through French media including the French international radio (RFI). The Senegalese government issued an international arrest warrant against him for his advocacy of violence and threats to the countries national security. However, the French government seems to disregard this warrant. Similar attitude is adopted by other European countries vis-à-vis rebel leaders from Chad, Sudan and some Asian states.

[42] Senegalese rebels have sanctuaries in the Gambia where they benefit from governmental support. Also, thousands of refugees in that country are registered in the electoral lists as they are of the same ethnic group as President Yaya Jammeh and likely to vote for him. Others are in under-governed areas in northern Guinea Bissau and operate in conjunction with other armed bandits and narco-trafficants.

[43] Raymond W. Copson, *Africa's Wars and Prospects for Peace* (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc. 1994), 104.

[44] Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Mathews, *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa*, 383.

[45] Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, 26.